of a European monarch had just called to wish her well in her new life. For she was engaged to marry a man whom many a Belgravian mother would willingly have toiled all many nights to net. She has succeeded in her walk in life far more through her gifts of mind than through her physical attractions, exquisite as they are. Simply dressed, save for her priceless pearls, she was perfectly happy writing her book and loving her small son in very rural surroundings, she who has thought nothing of dissipating enormous fortunes as lightly as she scattered the Norjuandy sands through her long twining fingers. The contradictions of human nature are defined in her more sharply than in most of us, this woman who would pass from her tiny holiday apartment with the coroneted gold toilet set on the rickety table, to the beach, in a sailor hat and cotton dress, with a string worth £20,000 round her neck. Whose small son kissed his mother's hand with an old-world grace while she talked to me of her *debut* at a Paris theatre at which

the then Prince of Wales was present, and of her four triumphal visits to St. Petersburg.

Of superior birth, and a countess by marriage with a naval officer of distinction, she

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